

Honolulu Star-Bulletin

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EDITOR

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Without consistency there is no moral strength.—Owen.

A DIFFERENCE OF TRANSLATORS

In justice to the peace commissioners from Japan who spoke here last Monday night, it should be said that very possibly their utterances suffered in the translation. Certainly several Japanese of this city who speak English practically as well as their mother tongue, did not interpret the spirit of Baron Hattori's address to be "peace if possible." This kind of spirit has been criticised indignantly in some quarters, but it may not have been the real spirit of the commissioners at all.

The Star-Bulletin is informed by a prominent Japanese here whose command of the English language is ready that the commissioners insisted upon peace in any event, peace at all hazards, and not "peace if possible." This paper is also informed that the local Japanese were not told to be "always loyal to the mikado" in the sense that they should necessarily adopt the attitude of Japan as their own, but in the sense that they should always cherish the memory of the mikado and pay to him the respect due to the high office of which he is the titular representative.

With such explanations, given to us in unquestioned good faith, the spirit of the commissioners takes on quite a different color. Their utterances are emphatically pacific instead of potentially challenging. How their addresses will be taken on the mainland remains an interesting point to be awaited.

WILSON'S FRANKNESS

President Wilson has been talking recently with extraordinary frankness. In speech after speech he has given utterance to things such as the American people are not used to hearing from their presidents. The acme of frank admission of the status of his administration would seem to have been reached in the following comment during the course of a talk made by the president at Newark, N. J.

"I want to say a few words about the Democratic party. I want everybody to realize that I have not been taken in by the results of the last national election. The country did not go Democratic in November. It was impossible to go Republican, because it could not tell which kind of Republican to go. The only hopeful and united instrument through which it could accomplish its purpose was the Democratic party. There were certain things which we want done, the country said, not certain persons elevated.

"There were certain things which we want demonstrated, such as that the government of the United States cannot be controlled by private interests. Now, the Democratic party is going to have a try at making these things successful, and if not we're not going to have another try."

Mr. Wilson, however, did not carry his frankness to its logical conclusion. If he did so, he could not sanction the free-sugar program, for the party to which he refers as "the hopeful and united instrument" of the people deliberately left a free-sugar plank out of its platform, and that party, furthermore, was successful at the polls on the declaration that its tariff-revision program meant no harm to legitimate industry.

SETTLE IT PERMANENTLY

The refusal of the merchants' association to take action on what its own members complain are the unfair tactics of the anti-billboard campaigners does not help to settle the controversy. So long as the blacklist and the boycott are resorted to by those fighting the billboards, the merchants are bound to be involved.

This paper has pointed out the needless friction and the useless waste of energy and temper in the present campaign,—needless and useless because the methods used are not the right methods and the result to be obtained is not the right result. No group of men and women can force the billboards out of Honolulu. They may force Mr. Frazier out of the business, they may force shoe-stores and dry-goods houses and other local firms off the billboards, but that will not end the billboards. Many foreign advertisers will use the boards in spite of local sentiment, for they will not be particularly affected by local sentiment. The man who wishes to advertise whisky or patent medicines or tobacco or chewing-gum doesn't have to worry about an anti-billboard campaign; in fact, such a campaign is distinctly to his profit, for it forces the local firm to dis-

continue using outdoor advertising and thus reduces the competition for space and the cost of putting up signs, as well as centralizes attention on fewer advertisements.

Now the result of this is going to be—already is—discrimination against the local advertiser and in favor of the foreign advertiser. What merchant will relish the spectacle of his own advertisements, attractive and neat and thoroughly legitimate, coming down and other advertisements—whisky or patent medicines, say,—going up?

Even if local merchants are clubbed into unwilling acquiescence in this campaign, the bill-board question is not settled.

The only plan that offers permanent relief from abuse of the boards and a permanent solution of the fight is an agreement whereby billboards will be restricted to a section of the city where their use will be recognized as legitimate, in the line of legitimate business.

The Oahu Central Improvement Committee which in the past has done good work along improvement lines, could very well take up the subject. The Star-Bulletin has suggested a civic commission to take up not only billboards but the infinitely larger question of city planning on a big scale. The improvement committee with the proper backing by the public could quite easily serve as such a commission.

THE GIBRALTAR OF COMMERCE

The mighty commerce of the Pacific is going forward by leaps and bounds, it is noted in Leslie's Weekly, which gives an interesting summary of trade in this ocean and possibilities after the canal is completed. Among the striking figures are the following:

Australia imports \$326,000,000 worth of merchandise annually; China \$314,000,000; Japan, \$255,000,000; the Straits Settlements, \$226,000,000; Hongkong, \$180,000,000; Dutch East India, \$127,000,000; Chili, \$127,000,000; New Zealand, \$95,000,000; the Philippines, \$55,000,000; French Indo China, \$37,000,000; Siam, \$27,000,000; Peru, \$24,000,000; Bolivia, \$23,000,000; Korea, \$20,000,000; Ecuador, \$8,000,000; the Pacific coast of Central America and Mexico, \$10,000,000; the Pacific coast of Colombia, \$5,000,000; the Pacific coast of Canada, \$20,000,000, and our own Pacific coast, \$125,000,000.

Of the grand total of this imported merchandise about \$200,000,000 comes from the United States, \$500,000,000 from the United Kingdom, \$300,000,000 from continental Europe, and the remainder from areas adjacent to the places of import. A great share of the imports from the United States and Europe to the countries on the Pacific consists of manufactures. The share of exports sent by the Pacific ocean countries to the United States is about 15 per cent of the total, as against 10 per cent of their imports drawn from the United States.

That the Huerta reign in Mexico is backed by old Porfirio Diaz and the Porfiristas is proved by the readiness of Paris bankers to make a loan of \$25,000,000 to the republic. Thanks to an able financial policy, Diaz built up banking connections with Europe that endure in spite of the brief Madero regime.

A prominent college professor says it is impossible to tell a lie in Esperanto. What a fine language this would be to enforce on office-seekers around election time!

Notwithstanding that the name of the new British ambassador is Spring-Rice there is every reason not to place him in the vernal class.

Speaking of the high cost of living, an investigation is threatened into the prevailing prices in the United States senate restaurant.

Doesn't look as if Wilson is going to have much use for that summer home in New Hampshire.

Wilson has stopped all the warlike preparations he can reach, but Gov. Johnson continues at the old stand.

Dr. Silvestri might turn his fruit-fly parasite loose on the gubernatorial bug.

That "gentlemen's agreement" evidently isn't considered binding by Gov. Johnson et al.

The administration evidently intends to revise business downward also.

THE CALIFORNIA SITUATION AS VIEWED BY THE PRESS IN JAPAN

AS UNSATISFACTORY AS EVER

The reported reply of Governor Johnson of California to President Wilson, in connection with the proposed alien land legislation, does not satisfy the Tokyo Asahi. The governor is quoted as assuring America's chief executive that if any alien land act is passed, it will be of a general character, and that the language employed in it as to foreigners ineligible to citizenship will be "that which is sanctioned by precedents in existing statutes on the same subject." What the governor means by all this is probably no more than the alteration of the phrase "aliens ineligible to citizenship" into "aliens that have not signified their intention to be naturalized." But, in the Asahi's opinion, such an alteration does not in the least change the anti-Japanese nature of the proposed legislation. It should be remembered that the "statutes on the subject" enacted in Delaware and several other states are intended to induce the foreign land-owners to become American citizens, so that more land in these states may be brought under cultivation. (Much of the land is now held by Europeans for speculative purposes, and so remains undeveloped.) Governor Johnson ought to realize that there is an important difference between these statutes and the California bills in their aim. Besides, so long as National Statute No. 2169, making only white persons and Africans eligible to American citizenship remains unaltered, Japanese residents in the United States will not be able to "signify their intention to be naturalized." Seeing, moreover, that Europeans will not be in any way affected by the alteration to which Governor Johnson evidently refers, the conclusion is inevitable that the alien land bills are directed exclusively against the Japanese. Thanks to the mistake that the Washington government has committed in dealing with the matter, and to the obduracy of the California legislators, the anti-Japanese situation is growing worse and worse.

THANKS TO WASHINGTON AUTHORITIES

The Jiji is more sanguine about the California situation than its contemporary just quoted. It highly appreciates the earnest efforts being made by President Wilson and Secretary Bryan to prevent the proposed anti-Japanese legislation in California. They have already twice issued telegraphic instructions to Governor Johnson in this connection, and now Mr. Bryan is reported to have left for California to bring the legislators to reason. The secretary's action is almost unprecedented, and is evidence of the desire of President Wilson for an amicable settlement. The Jiji, however, has the same opinion as the Asahi as to the effect on the Japanese of the suggested alteration of the phrase "aliens ineligible to citizenship" into "aliens that have signified their intention to be naturalized." Unless California is induced either to abandon the bills altogether or to deny land-owning rights to all aliens without discrimination, it could not escape the charge of legislating especially against the Japanese. President Wilson cannot have sent his secretary to California to get such a meaningless alteration made. From the advice that he recently gave Governor Johnson and the California legislators, it is evident that he disapproves the present alien land bills, in their entirety, as they have been introduced with the sole object of expelling the Japanese from the state. There are thus ample reasons to believe that Mr. Bryan has been sent to California to urge the withdrawal of the bills, and not merely the superficial alteration of their phraseology. The Jiji confidently awaits a good piece of news as to the secretary's efforts for Japan.

COMPARED TO THE BOXER TROUBLE

Considering the attitude of the California legislature and the reply of Governor Johnson to President Wilson's warning, the Hochi is now convinced that the alien land bills will become laws. Formal negotiations will thereupon be opened between Japan and America, and the former's attitude will have to become firmer than ever. The efforts of the Washington authorities to prevent discriminatory land legislation in California cannot

be too highly appreciated for the sake of Japan-American friendship. But it is not to their mere wording, but to the bills themselves that Japan objects. Even if they are made to apply nominally to all foreigners, in obedience to the literal sense of President Wilson's advice, it will be the Japanese that will suffer most. Of course, Japan does not like to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. The alien land acts in force in Arizona and several other states and territories have elicited no protest from her, as they do not affect her interests. But the case of California is different. The vast interests at stake simply compel her to protest. If Governor Johnson considers it unjust for Japan to protest against the proposed land legislation in his state only, she would protest also against acts of a similar nature elsewhere. At any rate, if California persists in its obduracy, the matter will have to be made a subject of formal negotiations between Japan and America, and then the Washington government will have to receive protests from a friendly power against the action of a section of its nationals, which it recognizes to be indefensible. The anti-foreign agitation that has arisen in California resembles in its nature the notorious Boxer trouble. If Washington is powerless to stop it, it will have to submit to the interference of the foreign Power or Powers affected.

THE BASIC PROBLEMS

In its issue of Friday the Japan Times published a summary, as wired to the Asahi, of the comments of the London Times on the California situation. The basic problems that the journal propounds as underlying the anti-Japanese movement, says the Osaka Asahi, are not unknown in this country, but the latter, being directly concerned in the affair, have been purposely avoiding their discussion, in the belief that it would only complicate matters. When, however, all temporary measures fail, the fundamental problems will have to be resolutely dealt with. It may be contended that the Americans have a right to object to a race, far removed from their ideal, establishing itself firmly in their country. But they must first consider whether the Japanese are really a race far removed from their ideal. It is said that only a small section of Americans on the Pacific slope have such a low opinion of the Japanese. If this is true, the Americans are in duty bound to suppress an unreasonable agitation carried on by such a small section of themselves. Failing to do this, the United States of America will lose its raison d'être as a sovereign state. It is to be regretted that President Wilson's second warning to California has not expressed the intention of the Americans as a nation regarding the treatment of the Japanese. Besides, even if most Americans considered the presence of Japanese among them to be detrimental to the prosperity of their country, they would have to consider how far they might exercise their right to rid themselves of the "undesirable" strangers. Surely not to the extent of ignoring the existence or hurting the pride of a foreign nation? This is also a question to be decided by the American nation itself, not by the Californians alone. The Times' editorial, however, gives the Japanese much food for reflection. In the opinion of careful European observers, the chivalrous exploits of this nation on land and sea cannot, alone qualify it to be considered as great and civilized as the nations of Europe. America herself is ashamed to be called the nation of the "Almighty Dollar," and is doing her best to keep abreast of the other white nations in spiritual or intellectual civilization. To appear the equals of white men in the eyes of Americans, the Japanese would have to equip themselves much better than now, especially as they are of a different race. Having been insulted abroad, they may well reflect upon their inward weakness as a civilized nation. They are not incapable of self-reflection even while asserting their rights abroad.

Great Britain has formally accepted the Huerta government in Mexico. A letter of recognition from King Alfonso of Spain will be presented next week.

Frederick Hess, Sr., proprietor of the California German Democrat and a newspaperman in San Francisco since 1866, has just died in that city.

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Contracts have been placed for the construction of three new Japanese barracks in Mexico City. The poorer class in Mexico City have been thrown into a panic by rumors of an uprising to take place during the celebration of Cinco de Mayo, the national holiday. Many United States reclamation service are fleeing the city.

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